

REMARKS

Claims 1-4, 6-8 and 10-12 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claim 1 is amended to incorporate the subject matter recited in claims 5 and 9, and for clarity. Claim 12 is similarly amended.

Claims 5 and 9 are canceled. Claims 2-4, 6-8, 10 and 11 are amended in view of the amendments to claim 1 and for clarity. Claims 13-23 are canceled in view of the finality of the Restriction Requirement.

Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-9, 11 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over EP 1 153 643 to Harada et al. ("Harada"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 is amended to incorporate the subject matter of claim 9, as outlined above. Harada does not disclose or suggest the subject matter originally recited in claim 9, and currently incorporated in claim 1.

Harada discloses a honeycomb structure having slits 12 (see Fig. 1A and paragraph [0024]). Harada does not disclose or suggest a plugging portion that has a width that decreases due to a shape of a lacking intersecting portion.

The Office Action asserts that Harada discloses a plugging portion whose width is reduced towards an end most portion in Fig. 1A. However, Fig. A merely discloses the configuration of slits 12. Fig. 1A does not disclose or suggest anything related to the width of a plugging portion.

For at least the above reasons, Harada does not disclose each and every element recited in claim 1, and claims 2-4, 6-8 and 11 depending therefrom. Also, for similar reasons, Harada does not disclose each and every element recited in claim 12. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-4, 6-8, 11 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-4, 11 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 6,343,923 to Cunningham et al. ("Cunningham"). This rejection is moot because claims 1 and 12 are amended to incorporate the subject matter of claim 9, which is not rejected over Cunningham.

In any event, Cunningham does not disclose or suggest the subject matter recited in claims 1 and 12, as amended. Cunningham discloses a die for making honeycomb cells having fins. See Figs. 6B and 7 and col. 6, lines 20-29. However, Cunningham does not disclose or suggest a plugging portion that has a width that decreases due to a shape of a lacking intersecting portion, as recited in claims 1 and 12, and in claims 2-4 and 11 depending therefrom.

In view of the above, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-4, 11 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) is respectfully requested.

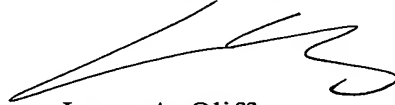
The Office Action rejects claim 10 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Harada in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,800,107 to Ishihara et al. ("Ishihara"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Ishihara does not disclose or suggest a plugging portion that has a width that decreases due to a shape of a lacking intersecting portion. Therefore, Ishihara does not supply the subject matter lacking in Harada. Thus, Harada and Ishihara, either individually or in combination, do not disclose or suggest the subject matter recited in claim 1, and claim 10 depending therefrom. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection of claim 10 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-4, 6-8 and 10-12 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: January 3, 2007

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